

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8686
INFO AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BANJUL
AMEMBASSY BISSAU

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAKAR 1935

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CG, AO, SG
SUBJECT: BORDER ATTACK ON ZAIRE: SENEGALESE REACTION II

REF A STATE 56060, B DAKAR 1758

1. SUMMARY: ALTHOUGH GOS OFFICIALS PROFESS TO LACK
INFORMATION ON SITUATION, PREDICTABLE SENEGALESE POSITION
IS EMERGING ON ZAIRE DEVELOPMENTS. CITING REPORTS OF ATTACK
BY "CUBAN-TRAINED MERCENARIES," FOREIGN MINISTER HAS
PUBLICLY DEPLORED "THIS COMBAT." IN LANGUAGE PARALLELING
GOS OPPOSITION TO SOVIET/CUBAN ROLE IN ANGOLA, SEMI-
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OFFICIAL PRESS HAS IMPLICATED NETO REGIME AND "HEGEMONIC"
POWERS SEEKING TO EXPORT THEIR IDEOLOGY TO ARICA: URGING
OAU INVOLVEMENT, EDITORIAL ASSERTS THAT AFRICAN
"SINGLE PARTY REGIMES AND DICTATORIAL AND ANTI-
DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS" HELP ATTRACT "IMPERIALIST
CONFRONTATIONS" IN PRIVATE, OFFICIAL SOURCES HAVE VARIOUSLY
STRESSED SENEGAL'S GOOD REALTIONS WITH ZAIRE, ITS COMMITMENT

TO TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF AFRICAN STATES, AND ITS
CONTINUED REFUSAL TO RECOGNIZE SOVIET AND CUBAN-SUPPORTED
MPLA (DESPITE AMBIVALENT STATUS OF UNITA REPRESENTATIVE
IN DAKAR). END SUMMARY.

2. MARCH 20 DAKAR DAILY LE SOLEIL CARRIES FRONT-PAGE
EDITORIAL ON ZAIRE BY EDITOR-IN-CHIEF ALY KHEURY NDAW,
WHICH CONCLUDES WITH CALL FOR OAU, "TRANSCENDING ITS
DIVISIONS AND SURMOUNTING ITS PETTY QUARRELS, TO DEPART FROM
ITS LETHARGY AND BRING BASIC PROBLEMS TO THE FORE, WHICH ARE
NOT ONLY DECONCOLNIZATION AND LIBERATION OF THIS PART OF THE
WORLD." NDAW TAKES VIEW THAT "ARMED INVASION" BY "KATANGAN
EX-GENDARMES" HAS BEEN CAREFULLY PLANNED BY EXPERIENCED
GUERILLAS. "TO THOSE WHO CAN STILL NOURISH DOUBTS (ON
FACT OF INVASION), A DECLARATION OF THE NETO GOVERNMENT
PUTTING THE WESTERN POWERS ON GUARD IF THEY SHOULD ATTEMPT
TO POKE THEIR NOSE INTO THIS AFFAIR ERASES ALL TRACES OF
SKEPTICISM." EDITORIAL ASKS "WHO REALLY SEEKS TO
DESTABILIZE A REGIME WHICH HAS JUST CELEBRATED THE TENTH
ANNIVERSARY OF A TRANQUIL REIGN;" IT IS NOT NECESSARY THAT
WE SEARCH FAR FOR AN ANSWER, ACCORDING TO LE SOLEIL. "WE
WERE WARNED SEVERAL TIMES, IN FACT, BY WISE AND MODERATE
VOICES, OF THE HEGEMONIC DESIGNS OF WHICH OUR CONTINENT
IS THE TARGET ON THE PART OF THOSE WHOSE PERMANENT OBJECTIVE
IS TO EXPORT TO WEAK COUNTRIES SUCH AS OURS FIRST OF ALL
THEIR IDEOLOGY, THEN THEIR TOTALITARIAN CONCEPTS, BEFORE
TRANSPOSING THEIR BANEFUL INFLUENCE STRUGGLE...." LE SOLEIL
REGRETS THAT "AFRICA, BY ITS IMMENSITY, ITS COMPLEXITY,
ITS INTERNAL CLEAVAGES, ITS SINGLE-PARTY REGIMES, AND ITS
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DICTATORIAL AND ANTI-DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS FINDS ITSELF
NATURALLY PREDISPOSED TO WELCOME ALL SORTS OF CONFRONTATIONS
UNDERLYING RIVALRIES BETWEEN IMPERIALISMS OF WHATEVER COLOR."

3. EDITORIAL UNDOUBTEDLY REFLECTS OFFICIAL GOS VIEW.
PRINCIPAL "WISE AND MODERATE" VOICE LE SOLEIL HAS IN MIND
PRESUMABLY IS SENGHOR'S. ALLUSION TO DANGER POSED BY EXTERNAL
POWERS IMPOSING THEIR IDEOLOGIES AND RIVALRIES IN AFRICA
ECHOES SENEGALESE POSITION ON ANGOLA, WHERE GOS CONTINUES TO
REJECT IMPOSITION OF NETO REGIME BY SOVIETS AND CUBANS.
IN MARCH 17 CONVERSATION WITH CHARGE, DIAKHA DIENG, CABINET
DIRECTOR IN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, ACKNOWLEDGED THAT
SENEGAL'S FRIENDS HAD ENCOURAGED HER TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH
NETO. HOWEVER, DIENG SAID, AS LONG AS MPLA IS DEPENDENT ON
HELP FROM USSR AND CUBA, IT WAS CLEAR THAT IT DID NOT HAVE POPULAR
SUPPORT WHICH SENEGAL BELIEVED NECESSARY. DIENG SAID IMPORTANT
THING IN GOS VIEW WAS PRESERVATION OF INTEGRITY OF ZAIRE,
WITH WHICH SENEGAL HAD CLOSE RELATIONS. DIENG SAID
SENEGAL HAD ONLY SKETCHY DETAILS AND DID NOT KNOW IF

CUBANS WERE INVOLVED IN INVASION, BUT GOS WAS FOLLOWING SITUATION CLOSELY AND UNDERSTOOD THAT US WAS TRYING TO DO IN ASSISTING ZAIRE. (ZAIRE REQUEST FOR US ASSISTANCE WAS FRONT-PAGE NEWS IN DAKAR.)

4. FOREIGN MINISTER SECK TOLD MARCH 17 PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE KNEW NO MORE ABOUT SITUATION THAN WHAT HAD APPEARED IN MEDIA. "IT SEEMS THERE HAS BEEN AGGRESSION ON THE BORDER BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA. ZAIRE IS SAYING THAT MERCENARIES - TRAINED BY CUBANS - ARE ATTACKING. WE DEPLORE THIS COMBAT. IT SEEMS THERE IS MORE AND MORE AGGRESSION IN THIS SECTOR." ASKED WHAT SUPPORT GOS WAS PROVIDING TO UNITA AND IF GROUP MAINTAINED OFFICE IN SENEGAL, SECK CLAIMED THAT ONLY PLO, ANC AND SWAPO HAD DAKAR OFFICES, THOUGH SENEGAL "PRIDES ITSELF" ON WELCOMING EXILES AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT USE SENEGAL AS A BASE OF OPERATIONS. COMMENT: FACT IS THAT UNITA REPRESENTATIVE
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WISLON DOS SANTOS HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED IN DAKAR SINCE MID-1976 (76 DAKAR 4346), WITH EXPENSES PAID AND DIPLOMATIC PASSPORT PROVIDED BY GOS, TO WHOSE HIGHEST LEVELS HE HAS PERIODIC ACCESS. HOWEVER, IT APPEARS UNITA IS NOT BEING PERMITTED TO OPERATE OVERT DAKAR OFFICE AS DO PLO, ANC AND SWAPO. END COMMENT.

5. IN SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH CHARGE DURING PAST WEEK, DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS KANDE OF GOS FOREIGN MINISTRY ALSO STRESSED SENEGAL'S LACK OF EXACT KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT IS GOING ON IN ZAIRE, BUT SAID SENEGAL DEPLORES USE OF MERCENARIES AGAINST AFRICAN OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY. SENEGAL, HE EMPHASIZED, IS COMMITTED TO MAINTAINING TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF ESTABLISHED STATES. ALTHOUGH SENEGAL BELIEVED EX-KATANGAN GENDARMES WERE INVOLVED IN INVASION, FORMAL GOS STATEMENT ON SITUATION WOULD NOT BE MADE UNTIL GOVERNMENT HAD MORE FACTS, KANDE SAID.
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